

ACTION
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INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 01 ISLAMA 26783 271218Z
ACTION NEA-04

2527

6. KABUL AND MOSCOW MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. RAPHEL

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 AOS-00 INR-10 EWR-00 GS-00 OLC-02
CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01 NSC-01 SO-03 NSC-03 SAE-08
NA-00 L-03 TRSE-00 PM-10 PA-02 OMB-01 NRE-08
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271216Z DEC 87
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6411
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY KABUL
AMCONSUL PESHAWAR
USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 26783

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: AF, PK, PGOV, PREL
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN: MFA BRIEFING

1. SUMMARY: AT FOREIGN MINISTRY'S WEEKLY PRESS BRIEFING ON 24 DECEMBER, THE MFA SPOKESMAN EXPRESSED "CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM" ABOUT AN AFGHAN SETTLEMENT AND TERMED GORBACHEV'S OFFER OF A CEASE FIRE DURING THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL AS AN "ADVANCE." HE ALSO SAID THAT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND PAKISTAN ON THE WITHDRAWAL TIMEFRAME HAD BECOME "NEGOTIABLE." THE SPOKESMAN SAID THAT UN NEGOTIATOR CORDOVEZ WAS DUE TO VISIT AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN IN THE SECOND HALF OF JANUARY. END SUMMARY.

2. AT HIS WEEKLY PRESS BRIEFING ON 24 DECEMBER, MFA SPOKESMAN FOREIGN SECRETARY ABDUL SATTAR SAID THAT THE RECENT MEETINGS UN NEGOTIATOR CORDOVEZ HAD WITH US AND SOVIET OFFICIALS SHOWED A POSITIVE WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF THE PARTIES FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO AFGHANISTAN AND THAT THIS WAS REASON FOR "CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM." HE SAID THAT PAKISTAN WAS ONLY WAITING FOR THE SOVIETS AND THE AFGHAN REGIME TO TRANSLATE THEIR RECENT STATEMENTS INTO REALITY. SATTAR ALSO SAID THAT GORBACHEV'S OFFER AT THE WASHINGTON SUMMIT TO HAVE SOVIET TROOPS REFRAIN FROM MILITARY OPERATIONS DURING THE WITHDRAWAL WAS "AN ADVANCE."

3. ON THE WITHDRAWAL TIMEFRAME, SATTAR SAID THAT THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TIMEFRAMES PROPOSED BY PAKISTAN AND THE SOVIETS WERE SO CLOSE THAT THEY WERE "NEGOTIABLE." HE SAID THAT ACCORDING TO THE GENEVA DRAFT ACCORDS, THERE WOULD BE A SIXTY-DAY GAP BETWEEN THE SIGNING OF THE AGREEMENT AND WHEN THE AGREEMENT WOULD ENTER INTO FORCE.

4. SATTAR DENIED THAT THE ISSUE OF A FUTURE GOVERNMENT IN AFGHANISTAN WAS THE MAIN OBSTACLE TO AN AFGHAN SETTLEMENT. HE SAID THE ISSUE WAS OUTSIDE OF THE GENEVA TALKS AND THAT BOTH THE SOVIET UNION AND PAKISTAN BELIEVED A FUTURE GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE AFGHAN PEOPLE TO DETERMINE.

5. SATTAR SAID THAT UN NEGOTIATOR DIEGO CORDOVEZ WILL VISIT AFGHANISTAN AND PAKISTAN IN THE SECOND HALF OF JANUARY IN AN EFFORT TO LAY THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE NEXT GENEVA ROUND. ASKED IF CORDOVEZ WILL BE MEETING WITH AFGHAN RESISTANCE LEADERS, SATTAR REPLIED THAT NO SUCH MEETING WAS ARRANGED BUT THAT CORDOVEZ WAS FREE TO MEET WHOMEVER HE WANTED. SATTAR ADDED THAT PAKISTAN HAD NO OBJECTION TO A CORDOVEZ-RESISTANCE MEETING.

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